

serpentine

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by [crimsvn](#)

Summary

Cursed with the ability to turn people to stone, Dream isolates himself from the world in the fear of losing loved ones as a cause of his affliction—so when a man washes up on the shore of his secluded island, he isn't quite sure what to do.

But somehow, some way, he'd end up falling in love.

Notes

i've had this idea sitting around in docs since forever (aka march lol) and saw the idea brought up again on twitter (@/waterfairi i believe) so i said. lemme speedrun this rq. so here we are

See the end of the work for more [notes](#)

By nature, Dream was a lonely creature.

Though isolated by his own volition, it was a curse that had made the idea of self-exile so appealing. Earning the ability to turn any man, woman, or child into stone the moment they made contact with his gleaming, serpentine eyes—accident or not—could easily make a good man fearful of others. A bad man may take it as a way to commit nefarious acts, but Dream was not such.

He made a home far from civilization on a secluded island, where no one could ever be hurt by his curse. No one but him. And by this nature, Dream was destined to be alone.

So when someone washes ashore one day, Dream isn't quite certain what to do. It had been a long time since he'd last seen a human up close.

Dream thinks the man might be dead, at first, his lungs possibly overflowed with water if he hadn't died from other causes, but as Dream places a hand on his damp shoulder, the man begins coughing and spluttering as to force out the salty ocean water that had climbed down his throat.

Dream stumbles back, startled by the sudden gain of consciousness. He wants to look, wants to check if the man is okay, but out of fear he averts his gaze, not wishing to cause harm to the stranger. Or, really—perhaps Dream wished to socialize with something other than his own shadow or with one of the speechless creatures that inhabited the island alongside him. He couldn't lose that chance to a dumb mistake.

The coughing comes to a gradual slow as the man is finally able to prop himself up on one elbow, choking out the last of the water in his system.

"Are you alright?" Dream asks quietly. His words are tentative, unsure. The man is startled, almost as if he somehow hadn't noticed Dream hovering nearby.

The man blinks. He stares ahead, his eyes glazed over, unfocused. He turns his head in Dream's direction, the latter promptly averting his gaze to the sand beneath his feet. Dream couldn't run the risk of losing company so quickly.

But then the man asks, "Is someone there?" and suddenly Dream is frowning and sparing a glance back in the man's direction.

Dream soon figures out why the man's stare had been so utterly *blank*—he was *blind*.

And while such an affliction was rather unfortunate, Dream can't help but secretly *rejoice* at the idea of company he could keep. Company he *couldn't lose*, at least not yet.

"Hello?" The man asks to open air and, *yes, right*. Dream had been standing so awfully still, it must've been difficult for his figure to be distinguishable from what nature surrounded them. The stiff, tense feeling of Dream's muscles begins to melt away, and as do his fears.

Dream moves to the man's side, though slow and careful. Before the man, Dream kneels. The sand is rough and uncomfortable beneath his skin, but he doesn't care.

"Yes, sorry, I'm here," Dream breathes. "Hi."

The man seems to shy away at Dream's proximity, so Dream sits back on his heels to provide more space. Perhaps he had forgotten some etiquette when it came to being around others, though he doesn't fault himself for this. Or perhaps he was simply overexcited. Regardless, what he *did* know was that he was simply just... in *awe*.

"I'm sorry," Dream says quietly. "It's been a while since I've been around someone else. Please just excuse any... well."

The man draws his eyebrows together, the corners of his lips downturned. It was rather strange to be staring into such empty eyes from such a close distance, but then again—when was the last time Dream had even made eye contact with *anyone*, let alone a blind man?

“So, you’re not going to... *do* anything to me, then, are you?” The man asks. There’s hesitance practically *oozing* off his body, and Dream could understand why. He had washed up in some foreign place inhabited by a stranger that had the ability to turn people to stone—not that the man knew that, of course. Dream wasn’t sure he’d be explaining his curse anytime soon, either.

Dream shakes his head. “No, of course not, why would I—”

Dream comes to a horrible realization of how likely it was that the man did not end up in the water by accident, if judging by the mild quiver in his voice, or the way he had flinched when Dream had come closer.

“You don’t have to tell me,” Dream says, “but you’re safe here.”

A quaint smile grows on the man’s face, and Dream thinks it may be the best thing he’s seen in a long while.

“Do mind if I take your hand?” Dream asks softly. The man nods and offers out a hand. Dream helps him stand and acts as best a crutch as he can despite their difference in height, and carefully begins to lead him away from the water with careful steps and gentle reassurances. The man is silent the entire way. Dream imagines that if he had his sight, his eyes might be wandering the scenery—that’s how Dream had first been, when he had discovered the island in his search for safe exile.

Eventually, they reach the small, stone-walled building Dream called home, and Dream settles the man inside. Light filters through the single window and open door of the house, casting a pale, comfortable, midday glow over the man. Dream takes a quiet, brief moment to admire him, before shaking his head and turning away. The staring would grow weird, surely, even if Dream was the only one aware of it.

Though, Dream also had a sneaking suspicion that the man could very well tell when there were eyes on him.

“Do you have any family that might be... waiting on you, back home?” Dream inquires. He had to wonder the possibility sooner rather than later, had to wonder whether or not Dream would have to help send off his only company into arms much less dangerous than his.

But to Dream’s secret relief, the man shakes his head. “No, I don’t,” he says. “And even if I did, I don’t think they’d care enough to want me back. Not much of a good worker when I can’t see.”

The man says it in a way that’s meant to be humorous, self-deprecatory, but it only comes off as *sad*, and Dream’s heart aches for him. He understands, more than the man knew. He understands what it’s like to be the outsider, to be unwanted, and it’s a painful thing, though Dream had had more than enough time to grow numb to such a feeling.

“Well, your company is good enough for me,” Dream tells him. “More than you’d know.”

The man tilts his head, angling his chin upwards, like he was considering his surroundings, though of course that wasn’t possible, not through sight.

“Might I get the name of the one person who’s ever wanted me around?” The man asks. The humour in his tone, though still weak, is more present than it had been before.

A smile pulls at Dream’s face. “My name’s Dream,” he tells the man. “And you?”

“George,” the man—*George*—replies. “Thank you.”

Dream furrows his brows. “For what?”

George shrugs. “Just... thank you.”

From then on, they grow to be a rather strange pair, alone on their little island.

Their. Not Dream’s. *Their* island.

After a few days of orienting themselves around each other, they fall into a rhythm Dream thought impossible for him to ever regain for the remainder of his life. It’s a rhythm only found existing among others, a beat, a *pattern* unique to shared company. It had all formed from a rather strange series of events, but they were *there*, in the *present*, and Dream—Dream was happier than he had been in years.

Once George had gotten a chance to familiarize himself with his new environment with some mild (and reluctantly accepted) help from Dream, he’s able to navigate himself as easily as if he had sight. Dream thinks it admirable, but George just insists it’s a curse of having to learn to fend for himself all his life.

Which, speaking of—even after days turn into weeks, Dream never learns how George had ended up on the shore, in the water, but then again, Dream never tells George about his own affliction. There was no need, not when it didn’t affect George.

But it’s okay, it’s *fine* that way, because they still remain in harmony with or without knowing, and it’s more than Dream could have ever asked for from the universe. After a bout of cruelty, she was finally kind.

Currently, they sat outside just beneath the cover of trees, Dream admiring the twinkling stars in the sky. George’s face is also tilted towards the sky, but his eyes are closed, and he relishes in the moonlight. He looks quite beautiful, Dream thinks then, though that was a thought that had plagued his mind since first meeting George. He was otherworldly, *celestial*.

Dream thinks he might love him. Even before his curse, he had always been quick to fall for others. It had left him with many broken hearts before, but something deep down told Dream that if... *if* he told George, it wouldn’t be the same, but in a very *good* way.

But Dream doesn’t say anything, not then. Instead, he sits peacefully in the quiet, calmed by George’s presence.

“You know,” George starts, and Dream’s gaze is hasty to move from the stars to his companion, “back home, they told tales of a monster, living in seclusion. A monster that could turn people to stone.”

Dream’s heart sinks to his stomach, and cold, *cold* fear spreads through his veins. *Did George know, this entire time?*

George’s eyes blink open. His clouded irises sparkle the same colour as the full moon above, high in the sky. There is no maliciousness in his face, his body, but Dream doesn’t allow himself to relax just yet.

“You don’t exactly seem like a monster,” George says. “In fact, you’re quite the opposite, really.”

Dream frowns. “How did you...?”

George laughs. “Call it a blind man’s intuition,” he says. George takes a deep breath. “Maybe had

you told me a few weeks ago, I'd have been afraid, even though, well. I'm assuming I couldn't actually *be* turned to stone. But Dream, I... you've done nothing but show me the compassion no one else has ever shown me, and I can see that—well, not *see*, but...

George trails off in soft giggles at the poor joke, and Dream can't help but feel inclined to laugh along with him.

“What I'm trying to *say* is,” George continues, “thank you. You've... you've done more for me than everyone else in my life has, and I am incredibly grateful for that.”

Dream shifts, angling his body towards George. The frigidness of the fright that had sent chills throughout Dream had now long since thawed. *Of course* George didn't hate him. Dream wasn't sure why he had expected distaste to come from George's lips, in his confession of knowing who—*what* Dream was.

“I could say the same, I think,” Dream admits. “Not that I've had many people in my life for a long, *long* time.”

George hums. He turns towards Dream and holds out his hands, palms facing upwards. Confused, Dream slips his own hands beneath George's, which seems to be what the latter had wanted.

“Can I do something?” George asks. “I've only ever done it for people I'm comfortable with.”

Heat creeps up the back of Dream's neck and up his face. For once, he's thankful for George's lack of sight, meaning he couldn't see the deep blush that tinted his face in the bright moonlight.

“I... yes, but what is it?” Dream questions.

George doesn't answer him, however, instead only requesting, “Just guide my hands to your face.”

Wordlessly, Dream does as he's asked. He brings thin, nimble fingers to his cheeks, before letting his hands fall to his lap. Dream's not quite sure of George's intention, but he sits still and unwavering. He waits patiently and earnestly.

Slowly, George begins by trailing his thumbs over Dream's cheekbones and up to the outer corners of his eyes. The pressure lifts for a moment before George's index fingers are following the curve of Dream's jaw, coming together at his chin.

Dream isn't sure for how long George continues tracing careful fingers over Dream's features, but he most definitely couldn't complain. Dream could sit there forever, if it came down to it.

Although, he does find himself asking, “What *are* you doing, George?”

George smiles softly as he continues drawing his patterns. “I'm learning what you look like.”

Dream blinks. “You... what?”

One of George's hands has dropped back to his side, but his other hand's thumb rests on Dream's cupid's bow, almost dangerously close to Dream's lips.

“I want to know what this *ferocious* monster I've come to know looks like,” George teases. “Now, one last thing.”

George's other hand falls, but only as his lips connect with Dream's. For a moment, Dream is stiff as a board, not having expected the kiss at all, but as soon as his brain has caught up, he's melting

into George, and they converge into one beneath the moonlight, in their shared rhythm.

It would be an extra step in their pattern, one that turned it from simple companionship to partnership and *love*—but not one *ounce* of Dream would mind.

End Notes

you can find me on [twitter](#)!! :)

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